

INITIAL POLREP

DATE: 10/1/90

FROM: MAUREEN C. PAPA, SO, EERB, REGION 5, SECTION 11

TO: B. BOWDEN, CHIEF, EERB, CHICAGO, IL
J. PERREONE, DFC, PUB. AFF., CHICAGO, IL

SUBJECT: WAUKEGAN TAR PIT SITE, WAUKEGAN, IL

POLREP: POLREP 1

SITE NO: KT

EPA Region 5 Records Ctr.



247769

1. SITUATION

A. The Waukegan Tar Pit site is located at the corner of Dahringer and Pershing Roads in Waukegan, Illinois. The site is a parcel of land situated in an industrial area bounded on the east by the EJ&E railroad line, on the west by N. Sand Rd., on the north by Dahringer Rd., and on the south by a parcel of land owned by the City of Waukegan.

B. Currently, the property is owned by the North Shore Sanitary District (NSSD) and a small portion by the EJ&E Railroad. Previously, the North Shore Gas (NSG) Co. owned the property adjacent to the site. The NSG facility produced natural gas from coal. A by-product of this process is tar. Representatives from NSG deny any responsibility for the tar pit. The NSG facility was rated in the 1970's.

C. A site assessment was conducted by the U.S. EPA on 9/6/90 at the Waukegan Tar Pit site. A pond approximately 125 feet long by 50 feet wide was observed at the site. Approximately 4 to 6 inches of water overlays a pit of tar of unknown depth. Stressed vegetation and tar oozing to the soil surface around the pond indicated that the tar pit extends beyond the boundaries of the pond. Samples collected from the tar and the water on top indicated the presence of volatile organics. A tar sample collected away from the pond had a flash point of 72 degrees F.

D. The potentially responsible parties (PRPs); NSSD, NSG, EJ&E Railroad, were given verbal notice on 9/19/90 by the On-Scene Coordinator to restrict access to the site and the tar pit by humans and wildlife. The PRPs took action on 9/20/90 to install a fence to enclose the property and string flags across the pond to deter migrating blue heron and other waterfowl from landing. The fence was completed on 9/28/90.

E. Additional enforcement procedures have been initiated so that removal procedures can be undertaken as soon as possible.